

788.51 R56p

59-10640

Rigby

Playing the recorders

kansas city



public library

kansas city, missouri

Books will be issued only
on presentation of library card.

Please report lost cards and
change of residence promptly.

Card holders are responsible for
all books, records, films, pictures
or other library materials
checked out on their cards.

84-48-22



3 1148 00255 6298

JAN 24 1975 *Alaya*

MAI FEB 28 1976

MAI APR 4 1978

MAI OCT 7 1978

MAI MAY 15 1979

Playing the Recorders

by the same author

★

Published by Faber and Faber Ltd

LIFE AND GROWTH (WITH C. M. LEGGE)

WHAT CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE MEANS

PROBLEMS OF PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Published by S.P.C.K.

DISCUSSION ON MARRIAGE

ELEMENTARY CHANGE RINGING

PLAYING THE RECORDERS

★

F. F. RIGBY

with examples of music drawn by

J. F. RIGBY

and with a foreword by

ANTHONY BAINES

ST MARTIN'S PRESS INC.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 59-9872

© Fred Frankland Rigby

Printed in Great Britain

Printed by the

TO MY MANY FRIENDS
IN THE MANCHESTER BRANCH
OF THE
SOCIETY OF RECORDER PLAYERS

3.75

1910

Acknowledgements

It is not always easy for an author to assess the value of what he himself writes, but what can be said about this book is that it is more accurate than it otherwise would have been had not kind friends so readily answered the questions put to them. Let me then thank Edgar Hunt, Carl Dolmetsch and Walter Bergmann for replying so patiently to the many letters I have sent to them and for answering the questions I have posed on the numerous occasions when I have sat at the feet of these masters. I am grateful too to Joyce Wardle for her helpful comments on the script and also to her and Kathleen Higson for reading the proofs. My gratitude to my son, whose musical knowledge and ability have always been at my disposal, is unbounded for the patience and skill he has shown in drawing the illustrations. My acknowledgements are due to Messrs Novello and Co Ltd. for their kindness in allowing me to use the copyright tune 'Go and tell Aunt Nancy' and I thank them and the other music publishing houses, whose addresses I have given in the book, for passing on to me so much useful information about their published music; I hope this book will be one means of making their music for recorders more widely known.

Contents

FOREWORD	<i>page</i> 11
1. THE RECORDER: SOME HISTORICAL LANDMARKS	13
2. THE INSTRUMENTS	19
3. THE DESCANT (1)	24
4. THE DESCANT (2)	30
5. THE DESCANT (3)	37
6. THE TREBLE (1)	43
7. THE TREBLE (2)	49
8. THE TENOR	54
9. THE BASS	57
10. ORNAMENTATION	63
11. CONSORT PLAYING	67
12. MUSIC AVAILABLE	74
13. INSTRUMENTS AVAILABLE	81

Foreword by Anthony Baines

THE vast literature that the recorder has gained since its revival thirty years ago still has not adequately covered every aspect of this deceptively simple musical instrument. There are, for instance, many textbooks and 'tutors' which give the mechanical basis of recorder playing in terms of elementary notation and fingering. But these are really meant to be used under the supervision of a teacher, who will enlarge on the finer technical and musical points upon which good playing of any instrument depends; and not every lover of recorders can procure a teacher or wants to attend classes. This is where Mr. Rigby steps in. With twenty years' experience behind him, he has planned this admirable work, which is something quite new: a really suitable book for the unattended beginner, giving a full and up-to-date account of recorder technique and of *its precise musical significance at every point*.

'Up to date' is also important, because so much has been re-discovered during recent years about ways of performance during the classic periods of recorder music. Here the reader will be grateful to Mr. Rigby for the way he has invoked his scholarship, like his musicianship, to lead straight to the practical side of things. His directions for 'period' trills and ornaments will be valued by teachers and players with some experience. I have met nothing to compare with this book, and I am sure that it will receive a wide welcome.

ONE

The Recorder: some Historical Landmarks

THE recorder is one of the oldest musical wind instruments in existence and was played in England as far back as the eleventh century. Not much is known about it in these early years but its popularity, along with other instruments, was well established in the sixteenth century, for it is on record that Henry VIII played both the transverse flute and the recorder and he is known to have possessed a large number of instruments of both types.

Shakespeare introduced a group of recorder players on to the stage in *Hamlet* and used the instrument frequently in several of his plays. Other playwrights made use of the instrument to provide music of a quiet and restful type.

In the following century, the famous English diarist Samuel Pepys visited the theatre known as the King's House on 27th February 1668 to see *The Virgin Martyr* and wrote that 'that which did please me beyond any thing in the whole world was the wind-music when the angel comes down, which is so sweet that it ravished me, and indeed, in a word, did wrap up my soul so that it made me really sick, just as I have formerly been when in love with my wife; that neither then, nor all the evening going home, I was able to think of any thing, but remained all night transported, so as I could not believe that ever any music hath that real command over the soul of a man as this did

The Recorder: some Historical Landmarks

upon me: and makes me resolve to practise wind-music, and to make my wife do the like.'

That Pepys intended to keep his resolve is evident from the entry in his diary for 8th April 1668 where he states that after another visit to the theatre, this time the Duke of York's play-house, where he saw *The Unfortunate Lovers*, he went 'to Drumbleby's, and there did talk a great deal about pipes; and did buy a recorder, which I do intend to learn to play on, the sound of it being, of all sounds in the world, most pleasing to me'. How skilled Pepys became on the instrument we have no means of telling from his diary. Perhaps, like many modern would-be players, he found it much more difficult to learn than he had expected.

Early in the sixteenth century, a treatise on the playing of musical instruments was published, the recorder being one of those provided with a table of fingerings. In this and the following century much music was written which was suitable for playing on recorders as well as on other instruments. Though much of this music was not written specifically for the recorder, it was assumed that it would be useful to recorder players. Composers then, as now, kept an eye on the musical market and if the demand was there, they were prepared to meet it.

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, much music was written expressly for recorders, particularly for the treble which was then enjoying a great popularity. In 1679 there appeared the first instruction book dealing solely with recorder playing and this was followed through the years by others.

Early in the seventeenth century the recorder was used in operas of the day. In England in the second half of the century

The Recorder: some Historical Landmarks

the word recorder was gradually being superseded by the word flute, whilst on the continent the word flute had always been used, and this fact has led to much confusion amongst historians as to which instrument, the transverse flute or the recorder, was meant. If Purcell used the word flute when scoring for his operas and masques, he meant that the recorder was to be used. His opera *Dioclesian* contains a lovely chaconne for two treble recorders in strict canon upon a ground bass. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that other composers during this part of the century meant the recorder when they used the word flute.

From about the year 1700 the transverse flute, in addition to the recorder, was becoming accepted as a member of the orchestra and, partly because of its greater range and carrying power, it gradually took the place of the recorder in orchestral works. But during this transition period, Handel and Bach, as well as less famous composers, wrote for both instruments. Bach used the recorder in a large number of Church Cantatas as well as in two of his Brandenburg Concertos, whilst Handel wrote four Sonatas for treble recorder and harpsichord in addition to those he wrote for the transverse flute.

Gradually the instruments of the orchestra increased in tone power and towards the end of the eighteenth century composers no longer wrote for the once popular gentle-voiced recorder but concentrated instead on the more powerful transverse flute.

By the end of the nineteenth century dictionaries had come to refer to the recorder as an obsolete musical instrument, as indeed it was, apart from a few instruments which had found their way into museums or into the hands of private collectors. Yet the astonishing thing today, half a century or so later, is

The Recorder: some Historical Landmarks

that it is probably true to say that more recorders are made and sold than any other single musical instrument.

What has brought about this great modern revival of the recorder? In 1905 the late Arnold Dolmetsch began his researches into old music and musical instruments. After many years, he succeeded in making recorders, patterned on the old models he had discovered, but tuned to the concert pitch in use at the beginning of the twentieth century. Modern Dolmetsch recorders are tuned to the modern concert pitch.

A German instrument maker tried to copy a Dolmetsch recorder but succeeded only in mass-producing an instrument which looked like a recorder but did not possess the authentic recorder fingering. Realizing the value of a mass-produced instrument for popular music making, Edgar Hunt persuaded this German maker to produce cheap instruments with the authentic recorder fingering and these were imported into England in the nineteen-thirties. These cheap mass-produced instruments had the advantage of making the recorder well known and helped to increase the sales of the hand-made Dolmetsch instruments.

As more and more people began to play the recorder and to regard it as a serious musical instrument, so research began to be devoted to discovering period music, and because of this recorder players have now at their disposal a large and growing amount of sixteenth-, seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century music which was originally written for the recorder or is suitable for playing upon it. Further, a few modern composers have seen that great possibilities have presented themselves in this modern revival of the recorder and so have turned their attention to composing music which they regard as suitable for the great and growing group of recorder players. Their

The Recorder: some Historical Landmarks

efforts have met with varying degrees of success: some of the modern compositions have proved to be very suitable for the instrument; others show only too clearly that the composers do not fully understand the capabilities of the instrument.

The purpose of this book is not to teach the elements of music and some knowledge of music must be assumed. Rather is it to help those who are interested in music and who have toyed with the idea of playing the recorder to take the instrument more seriously than would otherwise be the case; to practise it more rigorously and to try to raise the general level of playing which, with far too many players, is deplorably low.

Some attention will be paid also to bringing before the would-be player the large amount of music available, for until this music is known, the vast potentialities of the instrument will remain a closed book. It may also help some teachers to look beyond the mere blowing of a folk tune with their children to the greater delights of ensemble or consort playing, information about which will be found in chapter 11.

Another possibility is that some recorder players may become so enamoured with wind instrument playing that they will feel the urge to learn some modern orchestral wind instrument. They will find that the recorder has prepared them for participating in the more modern music in which the recorder is not required. But whether the recorder is regarded as an end in itself, and many will find the instrument completely and absorbingly satisfying, or whether it is regarded as a step to learning a modern wind instrument, is for the individual to decide.

One big advantage of learning the recorder rather than another instrument is that the recorder player is much more likely to find other players to join him for ensemble playing in

The Recorder: some Historical Landmarks

small groups than is any other instrumentalist. There exists a Society of Recorder Players with headquarters in London and branches up and down the country. Membership of this society and regular attendance at branch meetings will bring the recorder player into contact with other like-minded enthusiasts and help to raise the general standard of playing.

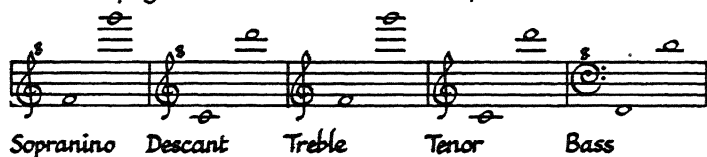
TWO

The Instruments

There are five sizes of recorders used in England, the three most popular being the descant, about a foot in length, the treble, about a foot and a half in length and the tenor, about two feet. There are two others which are not in such common use; a very small one, the sopranino, about nine inches long and the largest of all, the bass, which is about three feet long.

The ranges of the various recorders are shown in example 1, though skilled players can obtain higher notes still. The range of the bass is slightly smaller than those of the other instru-

1. *Ranges of the Instruments.* The Descant, Sopranino and Bass play an octave above the written pitch.



ments, though attempts have been made by modern instrument makers, with some degree of success, to increase the range. Both the modern Dolmetsch and Schott bass recorders now go up to high G, the fingerings for these notes on the bass instrument being as for the treble with slight modifications.

The sopranino recorder is usually made in one piece. The

The Instruments

bass instrument, being different in shape from the others, will be described later.

The descant, treble and tenor recorders are usually made in three pieces, the head joint, the middle joint and the foot joint. All the instruments have eight holes, a thumb hole behind and seven holes in front. The small double holes at the lower end of most instruments are here regarded for descriptive purposes as one hole. The lowest hole is not in line with the others and, by turning the foot joint, its position can be adjusted to suit the shorter length of the little finger.

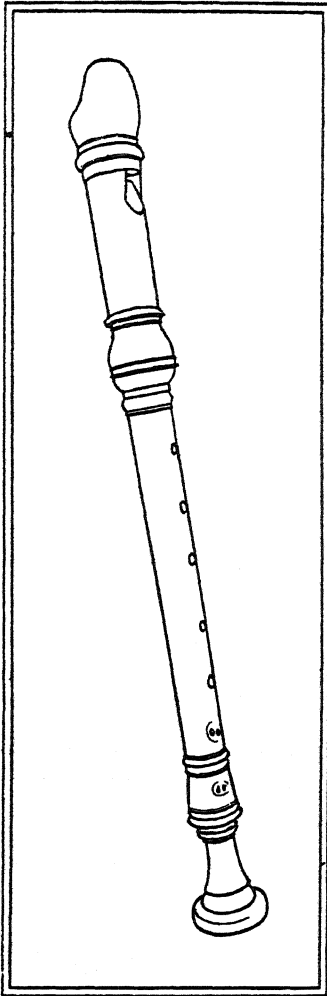
The tone is produced in the head joint, for a note can be sounded with this part of the recorder only. A breath of air is blown through a narrow passage in the mouthpiece on to a sharp edge known as the fipple and it is this which produces the tone.

If all the holes, including the thumb hole, are covered on the descant or tenor recorder, the note produced will be C, the lowest note of the instrument. The fingering on these two instruments is exactly the same, the only difference being that the notes on the tenor will sound an octave lower than those on the descant. Anyone who has learned to play the descant should therefore be able to play the tenor, for the only additional difficulty which will be encountered in playing the tenor is that the finger stretch will be greater than that on the descant.

If all the holes are covered on the sopranino, treble or bass, the note produced will be F, which again will be the lowest note of these instruments. Anyone who has learned to finger the treble, therefore, should be able to play the sopranino and bass. Here too difficulties due to differences in finger stretch will have to be overcome and this will take a considerable amount of practice. A further difficulty in playing the bass

The Instruments

instrument arises from the fact that the music is usually written in the bass clef.



The Head Joint

Showing the Mouthpiece
and the Window with the
Fipple.

The Middle Joint

Showing the three holes for
the left hand at the top
& three holes for the right
hand at the bottom. The
left-hand thumb-hole is
at the back.

The Foot Joint

Showing the (double) hole
for the little finger of the
right hand.

2. THE RECORDER

The Instruments

It should be the aim of all recorder players to possess and to play several instruments of different sizes, for by so doing the pleasure gained in ensemble playing is greatly increased.

Recorders are delicate instruments and should be treated with great care. When new, especially during the first few weeks, they should be blown for only a few minutes at a time, otherwise the joints may crack. This, of course, applies only to wooden ones.

After playing, and before the recorder is put away, the inside should be dried with a piece of rag; an old linen handkerchief will be found suitable for this. A woollen mop should not be used as fluff from it may find its way into the wind passage and spoil the tone of the recorder. The wind passage can be dried with a small feather or a strip of not too fluffy blotting paper. In doing this, care should be taken not to damage the sharp edge of the fipple, or the instrument will be useless.

New instruments, and even old ones in cold weather, may become blocked with moisture in the head joint. This can be cured by removing the joint and blowing through it from the wide end. Alternatively, leaving the head joint in position, a sharp breath blown into the instrument will clear the moisture, care being taken to cover the window of the instrument with the hand to prevent it from sounding. Should the passage become choked whilst playing, making it impossible to perform one of the operations just mentioned, the mouthpiece can be cleared by sucking quickly through it. The habit of dry playing, however, should be cultivated right from the beginning.

The joints should be greased occasionally with boracic ointment or vaseline as this makes it easier to assemble and take apart the instrument. If a joint becomes loose, it has probably

The Instruments

become dry because the instrument is not being played often enough. The remedy for this is obvious.

The recorder is an instrument which at first sight appears simple to play. It is possible after a few weeks' diligent practice for a beginner to play the easier folk tunes tolerably well. It is this fact which has created the impression, quite a false one, that the instrument is easy to learn. This is one of the dangers of the mass introduction of the instrument into school music. The belief has unfortunately become widespread that the recorder is the simplest of all instruments, suitable even for the infant school.

This is not to deny that the recorder is of inestimable value in helping children with their music, but it would be a pity if the belief were to gain ground that the recorder is an instrument fit only for children.

The simplicity of the instrument is more apparent than real and after the stage of being able to play simple tunes has been passed, further skill in playing the instrument becomes exasperatingly difficult to acquire. After this stage, as with any other musical instrument, there is the need for regular, prolonged and serious practice if there is to be any advance in skill in playing the instrument. The sooner this fact is understood by everyone, the greater the progress that will be made in the modern revival of recorder playing.

THREE

The Descant (I)

The instrument possessed by most recorder owners is the descant, the one about a foot long. This is largely because the descant is cheap to buy and so has become available to a great number of school children. Its popularity with children and teachers lies in the fact that the pitch of the instrument enables it to be used for playing many folk tunes in the school music class.

It is, however, a pity that the descant has come to be the most popular of the instruments in this modern revival, for, as already pointed out, the great composers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries wrote mainly for the treble recorder, the descant being used mostly for an occasional part in ensemble works. As long as a player is confined to the descant, and as long as schools continue to concentrate on this instrument in the music class, so long will the great recorder music written for the treble remain unknown to most players.

However, as so many people possess the descant recorder, it may be better to give some instructions for playing this before dealing with the treble. Let it be said at the outset that there are those who can play the descant really well, but they are few in number. There are many who succeed in blowing the instrument extraordinarily badly, giving listeners a poor impression both of the instrument and its music. Yet the sound of the descant can be quite entrancing when well played.

The descant recorder is not a toy but a serious musical in-

The Descant (1)

strument and today has a large repertoire of music at its disposal. Those beginners who are struggling to play folk songs should keep this fact constantly in mind and, like the serious student of any other instrument, submit to the discipline of frequent practice.

Probably the most important point for the beginner to remember is that the breath should be controlled when blowing; this should be done by the diaphragm muscles round the lower ribs. A steady stream of breath is what is needed, not hard blowing at one time and soft at another. If the instrument is blown too hard, the note produced will be sharp, and if too softly it will be flat. Generally speaking, however, it will be found that the lower notes need softer blowing than the high ones.

When playing, breath should be taken in through the mouth, the sound of the breathing being inaudible to a listener, and not through the nose or through the instrument. Breathing and phrasing go together, so obviously the best place to take a breath is at the end of a musical phrase. Care should be taken not to reduce the breath pressure on the last note of a phrase, otherwise this note will sound slightly off pitch.

Fingers should always be kept poised about half-an-inch over the unstopped holes, like padded hammers ready to fall. They should not be allowed to stray away, even though the learner may find it difficult thus to discipline them. After some regular practice the tired feeling in the fingers, which most recorder players experience, will go. Holes must be completely covered with the most suitable part of the finger, namely the pad, and not with the finger tip. Unless the holes are properly covered the effect produced will be a painful squeaky sound and not a musical note. This means in practice that the fingers

The Descant (1)

will be approximately at right angles to the recorder, whilst the instrument is held at an angle of about forty-five degrees to the vertical.

The notes are not produced by puffing each one with a separate breath. They should be blown as if the player were saying 'tu', the breath being allowed to escape by moving the tongue. Hence, notes produced in this way are said to be 'tongued'.

In playing rapid staccato passages, it is easier to use the syllables 'tu-ku', known as 'double tonguing' or 'tu-ku-tu', triple tonguing. In these, it will not be found easy to move the fingers and tongue together. A softer articulation can be produced by using the syllables 'du-gu', and a gentle flowing sound by the syllables 'tu-ru'.

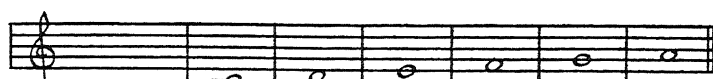
Example 3 is a *Tablature* or *Table of Notes*, showing how some of the notes are produced on the descant. In all the tablatures, a black circle indicates that the finger is to close its hole, and an open circle that it is to be raised from it. A partially open thumb-hole is represented by a circle with a diagonal line through it. Particular attention should be paid to the following fingerings as these will help the learner to see the relation between the fingerings in the two octaves.

1. Lower E and upper E are produced by the same fingerings except that the upper note is 'pinched'; that is, for the upper note, the thumb has partially to uncover its hole at the back. This is done by bending the thumb and drawing the tip slightly away from the top of the hole. Generally speaking, the higher the note the smaller this opening should be.

2. Lower F and upper F are produced by fingerings which are nearly the same. In playing the upper note, the little finger is not used and the thumb-hole is pinched.

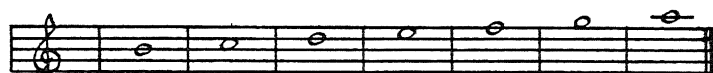
The Descant (I)

3. Tablature for Descant and Tenor



	C	D	E	F	G	A
Thumb	●	●	●	●	●	●
1st Finger	●	●	●	●	●	●
2nd "	●	●	●	●	●	●
3rd "	●	●	●	●	●	○

	C	D	E	F	G	A
1st Finger	●	●	●	●	○	○
2nd "	●	●	●	○	○	○
3rd "	●	●	○	●	○	○
4th "	●	○	○	●	○	○



	B	C	D	E	F	G	A
	●	●	○	∅	∅	∅	∅
	● ○ ○	○ ● ○	○ ● ○	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ○
	○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○	● ○ ○ ○	● ○ ● ○	○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○

The Descant (1)

3. Lower G and upper G are produced in the same way except that when playing the upper note the thumb-hole is pinched.

4. This applies also to lower and upper A.

Even the best recorder can be played out of tune by wrong wind pressure whereas faulty notes on imperfect recorders can be partially corrected by adjusting the wind pressure, though there is no excuse these days for the production of faulty instruments.

In the upper octave faulty intonation can be corrected by adjusting the size of the opening of the thumb-hole. Further, if a note is too sharp, this can sometimes be corrected by partially covering, or 'shading' as it is called, one of the other holes. Shading is a point of technique for advanced players and is mentioned here only as something to be kept in mind for achieving good intonation later.

The notes in the tablature in example 3 should be played slowly at first but with a gradually increasing speed. The notes should be played both up and down the scale. All the notes in this tablature should be learned as quickly as possible; this should not be beyond the scope of anyone really interested in music.

Examples 4 and 5 are tunes using some of the notes learned.

4. Go and Tell Aunt Nancy



(Collected and arranged by Cecil J. Sharp). By permission of
Novello & Co., Ltd.

The Descant (1)

Breathing places are marked in these tunes, as elsewhere, with commas. The first tune, 'Go and tell Aunt Nancy', an American folk song from the Appalachian Mountains, requires only the fingers of the left hand. The player should look at the notes all

5. Goddesses



the time a tune is being played; good sight reading should be the aim from the beginning and the player should not develop the habit of playing by ear. Each tune should be played dozens of times just as a professional musician would do when practising, until both can be played well. If there is a golden rule in learning to play any instrument, it is: 'Practise diligently every day.'

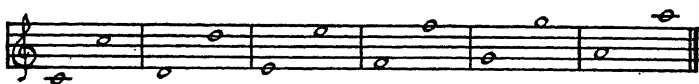
FOUR

The Descant (2)

The recorder, unlike the trumpet or the saxophone, is a gentle instrument and it must again be emphasized that it does not need hard blowing. This is particularly true of the lower notes of the instrument. Failure to blow more softly on the lower notes produces a harsh quality of tone, unfitting to be heard from the recorder.

The exercise in example 6 will help to illustrate this point, for if the notes are played properly it will be observed that the

6. Octave Exercise





low notes are best played softly whilst the higher notes will need just a little harder wind pressure to produce them. The exercise should be played slowly at first, and the speed gradually increased.


In playing the exercise, the similarity already pointed out between the fingerings of upper and lower E, upper and lower F, upper and lower G, and upper and lower A should be noted. The little finger of the right hand should be used when playing lower F, otherwise the note will not be in tune. In the early stages of learning the notes, the fingerings should be

The Descant (2)

checked with the tablature whenever there is any doubt.

Two other notes are lower and upper F \sharp ; once again, there is a similarity between the two fingerings. For the upper note,

	
F \sharp	F \sharp
●	○
●	●
●	●
○	○
●	●
○	○



7. Upper and Lower F \sharp , and Exercise

the thumb-hole is pinched but the third finger of the right hand is not used. The exercise in example 7 should be played slowly at first, with a gradually increasing speed as greater dexterity in fingering the notes is achieved. It should now be possible to play the melody in example 8 which introduces some of the notes already learned.

In the sixteenth century, Thomas Tallis wrote a fine hymn tune, usually sung to 'Glory to Thee my God this night', which can be played in the form of a canon. It is shown written as such in example 9. The duet can be played on two descant recorders or one of the parts can be sung and the other played on the recorder.

The Descant (2)

8. Diaphenia

Francis Pilkington (1605)



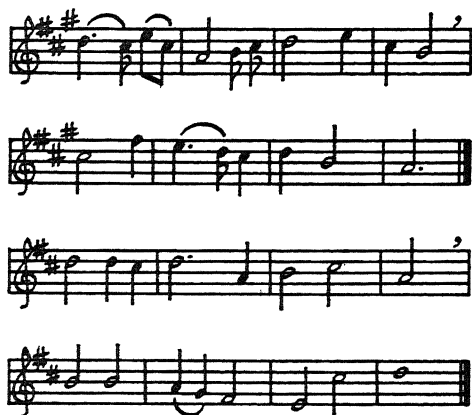
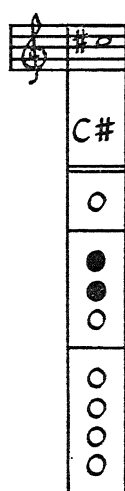
9. Tallis' Canon

Thomas Tallis



The Descant (2)

We come now to upper C#. The fingering is shown in example 10 and it should be observed that this is one of the few notes for which the thumb-hole is completely uncovered.



10. Upper C#, and Exercises

11. Exercise in Slurring



The Descant (2)

12. Barbara Allen



Sometimes notes are joined by a 'slur' sign as in examples 7, 10 and 11.

This means that the notes are not tongued separately, but only the first note of the group is tongued. These exercises should be played carefully since practice is the only way to overcome the difficulties of slurred notes. When the exercises are played properly no extraneous sounds should be heard and this will be very difficult to achieve. It should now be possible to play the tune in example 12 which includes both F# and C#.

When difficult slurred notes are encountered it is always tempting to tongue each note separately. This should always be avoided, for it is only perseverance and practice over a long time which makes it possible to slur difficult combinations of notes neatly. It is a good idea to practise the groups of slurred notes before beginning to play a tune.

All great musicians practise their instruments for hours every day. Though the amateur musician may find this difficult to do, nevertheless, anyone who wants to improve his playing so that it becomes pleasing to the ear will have to devote some part of every day to practice. Parents and teachers would do well to remember that this also applies to children.

The Descant (2)

Tunes and exercises throughout this book should frequently be revised, for they have been specially chosen to help in overcoming difficulties.

To avoid disturbing other people when practising, a recorder can easily be muted. Cut a piece of cardboard about one and a half inches long and slightly narrower than the width of the fipple; bend this at right angles about a quarter of an inch from one end and hook it over the fipple with the short end protruding into the recorder and the long end lying along the fipple. In this way the recorder can be practised almost without making a sound. If the cardboard is cut a little narrower still, a quiet sound will be produced which should not be disturbing to anyone in an adjoining room. But too much of this muted practice should not be done as it is important that the player

13. Upper and Lower G# , and Exercises

The Descant (2)

should be familiar with the various gradations of sound which it is possible to produce on his instrument.

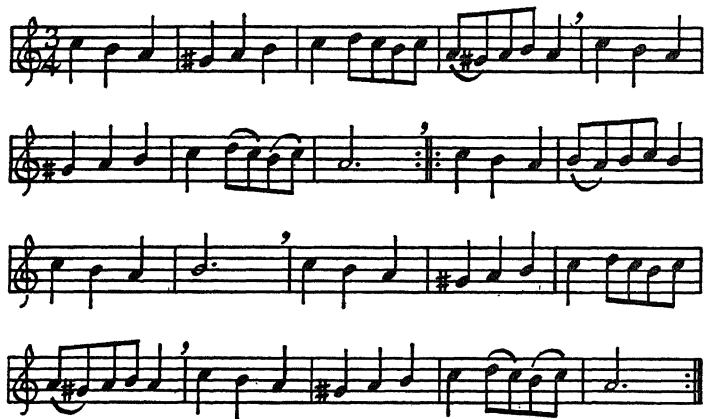
We next learn the fingerings for lower and upper G #. The similarity between the two fingerings should again be observed as this is an aid to memory; these are shown in example 13.

After the recorder has been practised daily for some months, there comes the stage when it is no longer necessary to ponder over the fingerings of the various notes. As soon as a note is seen in print, the appropriate fingers seem to drop automatically into position. When this stage is reached, but not before, the player can begin to regard himself as acquiring skill.

The tune in example 14, a Minuet by Henry Purcell,

14. Minuet

Henry Purcell



introduces G#. If a mistake has been made when practising a tune, this should be corrected immediately, otherwise it will be found that the mistake becomes part of the tune and very difficult to eradicate.

FIVE

The Descant (3)

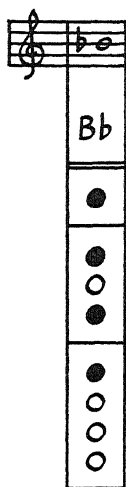
The charm of good recorder playing is partly responsible for the great and growing popular interest in the instrument today. Unfortunately, not all who possess a recorder and blow it are able to play it well. Only by treating the instrument as one which won the admiration of great composers of the past and practising it intelligently is it possible to become skilled on the instrument.

Recorders sound awful if they are badly played; but this is no peculiarity of recorders. It is true of violins, pianos, trumpets and all other musical instruments. Everybody knows that the latter instruments can be made to produce lovely music, but many people base their judgement of the recorder on what children are able to do on the instrument, which is often not very much when judged by high standards. This is to form an unfair opinion of the possibilities of the instrument. Just as modern orchestral instruments sound well if well played, so does the recorder.

A new note to learn is B \flat . This is sometimes found difficult to finger, especially when slurred with other notes. In addition to the finger and thumb used for playing B \natural , two other fingers, have to be used, one on each hand. This, somehow or other, makes it rather difficult to play.

In practising the exercise in example 15 therefore, do not

The Descant (3)



15. Bb, and Exercise

forget to use the first finger of the right hand in addition to the two fingers and thumb of the left hand. Unless this is done the note will be slightly out of tune.

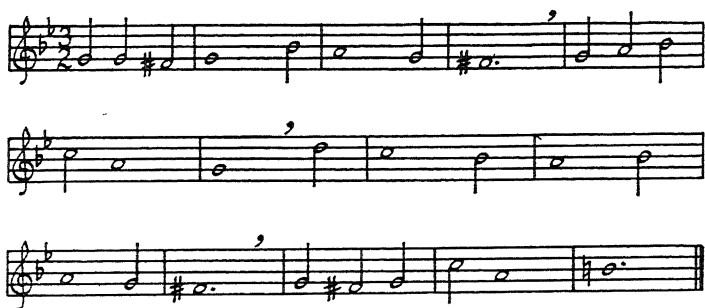
The importance of smooth playing cannot be too strongly emphasized. The recorder player should not think of a series of notes to be fingered correctly, but should aim at making a melody flow along. It is worth while listening to a good instrumentalist on the radio just to take note of how smoothly the melody flows. This is setting a high standard but it must be a recorder player's ideal at which to aim.

The player will be able to achieve this only when he is absolutely certain of the fingerings of the various notes. Exercises and tunes already learned, therefore, should be revised frequently, so that the notes become melodies. Example 16 is a tune which includes the note Bb as well as B and is one of the oldest English tunes in existence.

As with other instruments, vibrato can be produced on the

The Descant (3)

16. The Coventry Carol



recorder, though its use should not be overdone. A slight, quick variation in wind pressure will produce the desired effect. The skill and musical understanding of the player should be the controlling factor in its use.

Voices and recorders together enhance each other and with practice it should be possible for the recorder player, when sufficient skill has been developed, to accompany the voice, even if it is only doubling the voice part. In doing this, it should be remembered that some keys are easier than others for the beginner to play on the descant recorder; for example, C, D, F and G major.

There are still more notes to learn, the fingerings for which are shown in example 17. The very high notes on the descant recorder are not given here since they are not often used; they will, however, have to be learned and can be found as they are required in the complete tablature in example 43.

G \sharp and A \flat are the same note and are therefore fingered in the same way; this applies also to D \flat and C \sharp . These fingerings, already given in the previous chapter, will be needed occasionally, as well as lower and upper E \flat .

17. Further Fingerings

E \flat	E \flat	A \flat	D \flat	C \sharp	B \flat
●	○	●	○	●	● ●
● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ○	● ● ○	● ● ●	● ○ ● ○ ●
● ● ● ○ ○	● ● ● ○	● ● ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○	● ● ● ● ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Upper E \flat is another of the few notes produced without covering the thumb-hole. It is not an easy note for the beginner to play since so many fingers are involved.

To play lower E \flat and lower C \sharp the tiny holes at the lower end of the recorder have to be used. These two notes are not often needed in recorder music, though they should be known.

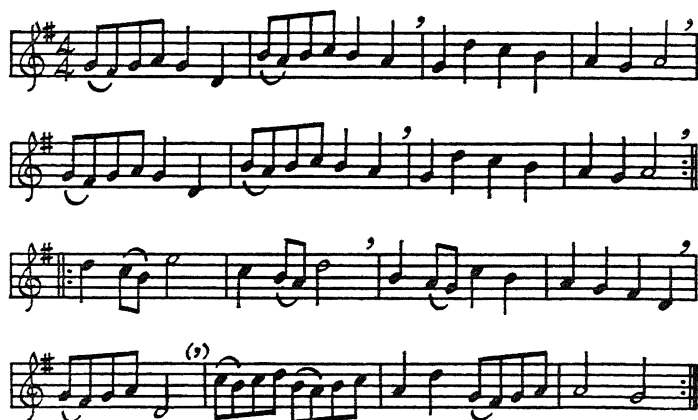
Sometimes the same note can be produced in two different ways. In example 17 two different ways of fingering B \flat are given. The alternative fingering is very useful when slurring B and C together. To do this using the ordinary fingering for B \flat tends to produce a little unwanted note unless the finger movement is done very neatly. The general rule in slurring notes is to move as few fingers as possible and this often demands a knowledge of alternative fingerings. Some players however do not approve of this alternative fingering for B for slurs and like it used only in trills and mordents.

The Descant (3)

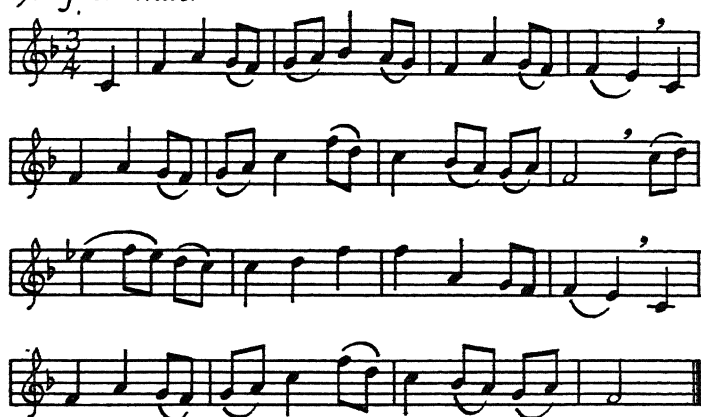
The alternative fingering for B \sharp is useful mainly when introducing ornamentation involving the notes B and C. As with many other groups of notes, using the ordinary fingerings involves the movement of too many fingers for neatness of execution and therefore alternative fingerings become abso-

18. Gavotte

G. F. Handel



19. Afton Water



The Descant (3)

lutely necessary for ornamentation. A number of these will be found in the chapter on 'Ornamentation'. In the tune given in example 18 the alternative fingering for B \sharp may be used, if desired, when B and C are slurred together.

The tune in example 19 introduces upper E \flat as well as some difficult slurs involving B \flat . The tune is, indeed, full of difficult slurs which should be practised separately before the tune is attempted.

To achieve real dexterity in fingering the descant recorder it is a good plan to practise country dances at speed. The keys of these tunes are usually the simple ones to play, but the speed of the playing creates its own difficulties. Such tunes provide excellent practice.

The tunes in the chapter on the tenor recorder are also suitable for the descant and provide additional material for practice at this stage.

SIX

The Treble (I)

The fingerings for the notes on the sopranino recorder, which is not so widely used as the other instruments, are the same as those for the treble. Most of the statements made about the treble may therefore be taken to apply to the sopranino.

There is a similarity, not at first apparent to the beginner, between the fingerings of all the instruments. If all the holes on the descant are covered the note produced is C, but if all the holes on the treble are covered the note produced is F. That is, the note produced on the treble is a perfect fifth lower than that produced on the descant. This is true of all the corresponding fingerings on the two instruments; the same fingerings on the two instruments will produce notes which are a perfect fifth lower on the treble than on the descant. The chromatic scale on the two instruments would be produced therefore by exactly the same fingerings, but the lowest note on the descant would be C whilst the lowest note on the treble would be F.

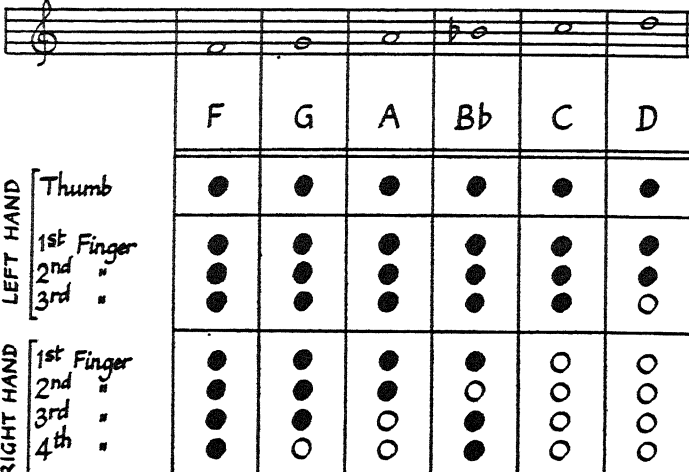
Keeping this fact in mind, it will be found that it is not as difficult as at first sight might appear to learn both sets of fingerings. It is worth persevering to do this, even for the beginner, as the pleasure of playing is more than doubled when one can play two instruments. Moreover, once the two sets of fingerings are learned it is possible to play all the instruments.

For the sake of convenience, the corresponding notes on the

The Treble (I)

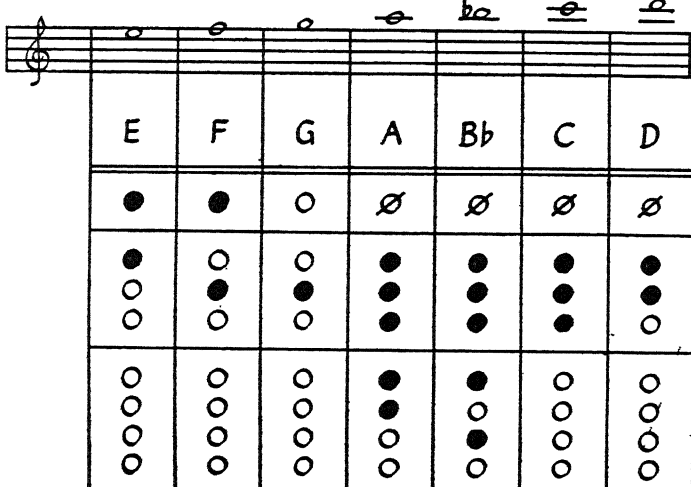
sopranino and the treble instruments are written on the same lines and spaces, even though the notes on the sopranino sound

20. *Tablature for Treble and Sopranino*



Musical staff: Treble clef, notes F, G, A, B \flat , C, D.

	F	G	A	B \flat	C	D
LEFT HAND						
Thumb	●	●	●	●	●	●
1st Finger	●	●	●	●	●	●
2nd "	●	●	●	●	●	●
3rd "	●	●	●	●	●	○
RIGHT HAND						
1st Finger	●	●	●	●	○	○
2nd "	●	●	●	○	○	○
3rd "	●	●	○	●	○	○
4th "	●	○	○	●	○	○



Musical staff: Treble clef, notes E, F, G, A, B \flat , C, D.

	E	F	G	A	B \flat	C	D
	●	●	○	∅	∅	∅	∅
	●	○	○	●	●	●	●
	○	●	●	●	●	●	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

The Treble (1)

an octave higher than those on the treble. This avoids the use of ledger lines.

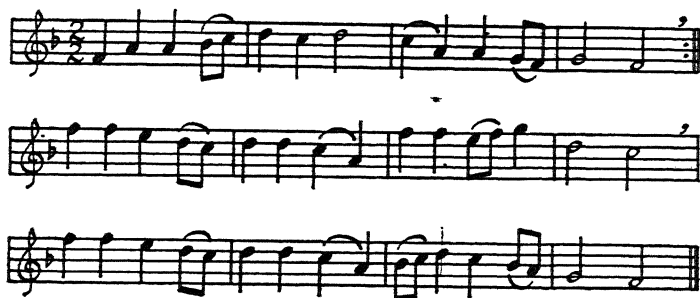
The tablature in example 20 gives the first thirteen notes in the scale of F which is a very common key for the treble recorder. The similarity between the fingerings of lower and upper A, lower and upper B \flat , lower and upper C, lower and upper D should be noted as this similarity is an aid to remembering the fingering.

As with the descant, there are difficulties to be overcome when slurring notes together, for unless this is done neatly, extra unwanted notes will be produced. When practising the exercise in example 21 care should be taken to see that only the notes written in the music are actually sounded on the recorder.

21. Exercise in Slurring



22. Jamaica



The Treble (I)

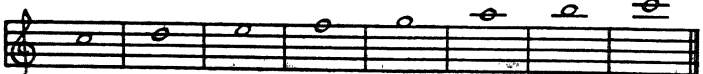
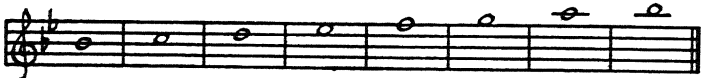
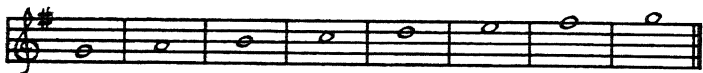
A disciplined approach about small matters such as this at the beginning will create greater skill in the long run.

23. Further Fingerings

Handwritten musical notation for the treble clef, showing a sequence of notes: *B \natural C \sharp D \flat E \flat F \sharp G \sharp A \flat B \natural C \sharp D \flat*

<i>B\natural</i>	<i>C\sharp, D\flat</i>	<i>D\sharp, E\flat</i>	<i>F\sharp</i>	<i>G\sharp, A\flat</i>	<i>B\natural</i>	<i>C\sharp, D\flat</i>
●	●	●	○	○	∅	∅
● ● ●	● ● ○	● ○ ●	● ● ○	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ○
○ ● ● ○	● ● ○ ○	● ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○	● ● ● ○	○ ● ○ ○	● ○ ○ ○

24. Major Scales



The Treble (1)

If the notes on the tablature have been learned it should now be possible to play the tune in example 22 which is an old country dance. There are a number of slurred notes which must be played neatly.

The fingerings for upper and lower B \natural , upper and lower C \sharp , E \flat (D \sharp), F \sharp , G \sharp (A \flat) are given in example 23. The similarity in the fingerings of upper and lower B \natural should be observed as this is a further aid to remembering the fingerings.

The major scales of F, G, B \flat and C should now be practised, as facility in playing scales is a great help in developing dexterity in fingering; the scales are shown in example 24.

Three fairly simple country dance tunes, given in examples 25, 26 and 27, will help to fix the various fingerings firmly in

25. Ruffy Tufty



26. Once I Loved a Maiden Faire



The Treble (1)

27. *Parson's Farewell*



mind. In all these tunes there are a number of slurred groups of notes and again it will help the player to play the tunes well if the slurred notes are practised separately beforehand.

SEVEN

The Treble (2)

Occasionally, it is necessary to play lower F# and lower G# on the treble; these are produced by using the small holes at the lower end of the recorder as shown in example 28. To play

The diagram illustrates the fingering and musical notation for lower F# and G# on the treble. On the left, a vertical fingering chart shows two columns for F# and G#. The F# column has four finger positions: top (one dot), middle (two dots), lower-middle (three dots), and bottom (four dots, with a small circle below). The G# column has four finger positions: top (one dot), middle (two dots), lower-middle (three dots), and bottom (four dots, with two small circles below). To the right, three staves of musical notation show exercises. The first staff shows a sequence of notes: F# (quarter), G# (quarter), F# (quarter), G# (quarter), F# (quarter), G# (quarter), F# (quarter), G# (quarter). The second staff shows a sequence of notes: F# (quarter), G# (quarter), F# (quarter), G# (quarter), F# (quarter), G# (quarter), F# (quarter), G# (quarter). The third staff shows a sequence of notes: F# (quarter), G# (quarter), F# (quarter), G# (quarter), F# (quarter), G# (quarter), F# (quarter), G# (quarter).

28. Lower F#, Lower G#, and
Octave Exercises

F#, for example, one only of the lower small holes is covered, instead of both when F# is played. The octave exercise shown in example 28 should also be practised, for it will help considerably in creating greater facility in fingering the various notes.

The Treble (2)

The very high notes on the treble, as on the other instruments, are given in the complete tablature in example 43 and should be learned as they are met. To produce the high notes the thumb-opening should be kept small, but when once the note is produced the opening should be slightly enlarged, or the note may tend to go flat. The technique of doing this will have to be acquired gradually.

As has already been stated, the treble recorder was the most popular and the most frequently used of the whole group of recorders in the sixteenth, seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, an enormous amount of music being written for it in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the form of solo sonatas, duets, trio sonatas and even concertos.

When Purcell, Bach and Handel wrote the word *flute* or one of its variants they meant the recorder. If they meant the transverse flute to be understood, they indicated this by some such word as '*traverso*'. Bach scored for both the transverse flute and the recorder, and when he had access to players of both types of instrument, he used both.

Handel used the transverse flute in orchestral ensembles, but he used the recorder in recorder and harpsichord sonatas, in quieter concerted pieces and in accompanying the voice.

Mattheson, a contemporary of Handel, and Telemann both wrote extensively for the recorder, the latter composer keeping in mind particularly the keen amateur who wanted good music to play. Mattheson wrote a number of sonatas for two or three treble recorders in various keys all of which are interesting to play.

The recorder, particularly the treble, was still widely used in 1723 and a recorder tutor was in print as late as 1798. During Handel's later years, both the transverse flute and the oboe,

The Treble (2)

instruments of greater carrying power, became more and more popular with composers and gradually the recorder was forced out of the orchestra.

Added to this there came the gradual decline in amateur instrumental music making, for the new wind instruments, to which were subsequently added more and more keys, became more expensive to buy and so beyond the means of many would-be players.

This in part explains why the modern amateur music maker, having discovered the recorder and the vast amount of music which is available, is now coming into his own again. There is a wide field here for modern composers if they will go to the trouble of understanding the capabilities of the instrument.

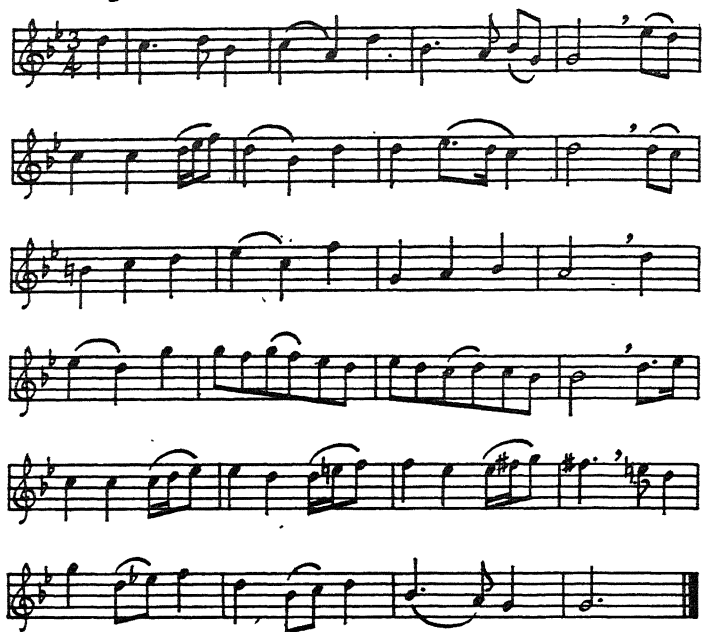
It may be remarked for the benefit of composers that it is doubtful whether compositions written with both the flute and recorder in mind will ever be really satisfactory unless it is remembered that the recorder has a smaller range than the flute. Some of the modern sonatas for treble recorder and piano or flute and piano are unsatisfactory in the higher ranges and are difficult and sometimes impossible for playing on the recorder. If modern composers will write suitable recorder music, not intended to be played on the recorder as an alternative to the flute, they will find great interest being taken by keen amateurs in their works.

The tune given in example 29, composed by Henry Purcell, will provide interesting practice. There are some difficult groups of slurred notes and these should be isolated at the beginning and practised separately. Whenever E \flat appears as one of a group of slurred notes, this group will be found difficult to play neatly. The same applies to the group D, E, F when slurred together. Only constant and intelligent practice will

The Treble (2)

29. Song Tune

Henry Purcell

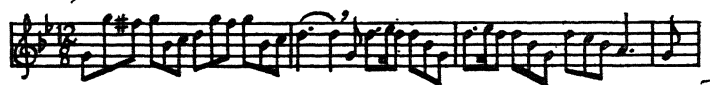


enable the player to perform such a piece as this with reasonable smoothness.

Example 30 is the subject of a fugue composed by Mattheson. It is taken from his Sonata in G minor (Op. 1 No. 9) for three treble recorders. The whole sonata is fairly difficult to play but fascinating to practise. All Mattheson's sonatas for two trebles

30. Subject of a Fugue

J. Mattheson



The Treble (2)

and three trebles, which are of varying degrees of difficulty, are interesting and worthy of study.

There is a vast repertoire of music available for the treble recorder and the serious player will want to make himself familiar with this as soon as possible. A few suitable pieces are mentioned in the chapter on 'Music Available', and the sooner these are studied, the better.

EIGHT

The Tenor

The fingering of the tenor recorder is the same as that of the descant, the only difference being that the tenor, twice as long as the descant, sounds an octave lower. There should be no great difficulty, therefore, in a competent descant player soon learning to handle the tenor.

The main difficulty to be overcome will be for the player to accustom himself to handling an instrument twice as long as the descant, much fatter and therefore heavier, and with holes farther apart than those on the descant. Because of all these points, the newcomer to the tenor instrument will find it rather cumbersome to handle and tiring to the fingers. Regular practice will overcome difficulties of this nature. Notwithstanding its size, many older children who have learned to play the descant will very quickly learn to handle the tenor.

Some players find the lowest hole difficult if not impossible to reach with the little finger of the right hand and prefer an instrument with a key for this lowest hole. If it is found that the difficulty persists after the purchase of an expensive keyless instrument, the makers will usually be prepared to fix a key. But an instrument without a key is better if the player can handle it with comfort.

The notes for both the descant and tenor instruments are written in the same position on the staff. If this were not done,

The Tenor

a tune written for the descant recorder would need too many ledger lines above the stave. The tune played on the tenor sounds as written whilst the same tune played on the descant sounds an octave higher than written.

It follows, therefore, that all the statements made in the chapters on the descant instrument apply to the tenor also. The fingerings, exercises and tunes in these earlier chapters should be studied and played on the tenor recorder for the same difficulties will have to be overcome on the tenor as on the descant.

In addition to the tunes in the chapters dealing with the descant recorder, the tune by Henry Purcell in example 31

31 *Scotch Tune*

Henry Purcell



should be practised. The tune has a lot of work for the right hand to do and should help the player to overcome the difficulty of playing the lower notes on the tenor. The tune also contains a large number of slurred notes, some of them very difficult to play neatly. There will be the usual temptation to tongue these notes separately but this should be avoided.

The Tenor

Unlike the treble, very little music has been written for the tenor as a solo instrument. A number of pieces are available for descant recorder with a keyboard instrument and these are, in some cases, suitable for playing on the tenor. Example 32 is

32. *Greensleeves*



a lovely old tune which sounds delightful on the tenor recorder if played smoothly.

The main use of the tenor will be in ensemble playing, for it will be found that the instrument is used in most trios, quartets and quintets. It is, in fact, the backbone of ensemble playing and when mastered will give endless pleasure.

NINE

The Bass

The bass recorder is three feet long, twice as long as the treble, and because of its length it is not possible for the player to put the end of the instrument to his lips.

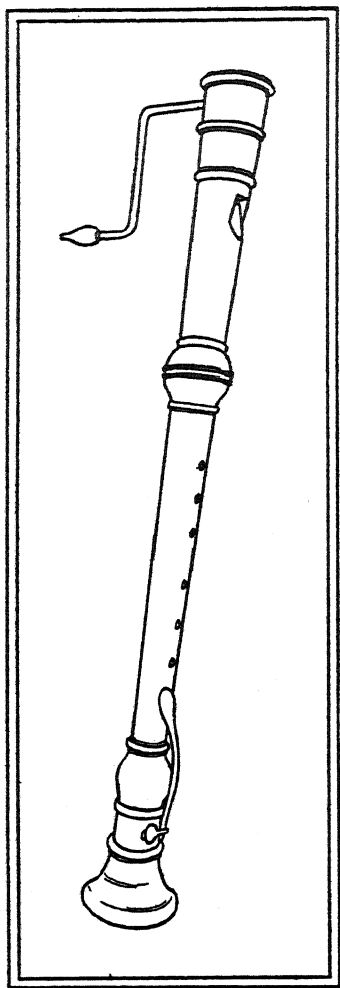
The player's breath has to be conducted through a curved tube or 'crook' to the head of the instrument. Further, the holes of the instrument are rather far apart and the lowest hole is a considerable distance from the little finger. This hole, therefore, is always closed by means of a key.

It is tiring to hold the bass recorder unless some form of sling, similar to that for a bassoon, is used. This can be fastened to a ring attached to the back of the instrument. Another method is to fasten the sling to the lowest and narrowest part of the instrument, out of the way of the key. The sling can be made of cord, the length being adjusted to suit the individual player. It is then placed round the player's neck and the hands are left free for the fingering. The right hand thumb is used to steady the instrument.

The fingering on the bass is the same as that used for the treble and sopranino instruments and occasionally the music for the bass instrument is written in the treble clef. Some of the music written for the treble can be used for practising the bass instrument to develop facility of fingering.

Usually, however, music written for the bass is in the bass

The Bass



33. THE BASS RECORDER

In addition to those features, common to all the instruments, which are shown in the drawing in Chapter Two, this drawing shows two features of the Bass, namely the mouthpiece at the end of a tube and the key used for closing the lowest hole.

The Bass

clef and the player who aspires to become competent on all the instruments, and this is true of most recorder players, will have to learn to read music in this clef. This need not prove difficult. Once again, it is all a matter of frequency of practice in playing each instrument regularly.

Until fairly recently, the highest note obtainable on a bass recorder was D, but the modern basses produced by Dolmetsch and also those by Schott can be played to upper G. The fingerings for some of these high notes are not quite the same as those for the treble and are supplied by the makers when a bass instrument is purchased. The bass recorder is obviously most useful in ensemble playing and the good bass player will never lack friends amongst other recorder players.

Because of its size, more breath is needed to produce a note on the bass than is the case with the other instruments and the player will constantly have to be on the alert to make his instrument sound in time with the others in the consort.

The wide spaces between the holes will be an initial difficulty to be overcome by the bass player and it will be observed that, in the early stages, considerable trouble will be experienced in using the fingers of the right hand. It is a good plan for the player of more than one instrument to accustom himself to changing over from one instrument to another during the same practice session. This prevents the fingers from getting set to one size of instrument.

The complete tablature in the bass clef, together with the special fingerings on the Dolmetsch and Schott bases, is given in example 34 and should be carefully learned and practised. Example 35, a German tune dating from the fifteenth century and written in the bass clef, will provide good practice. Also, the bass parts in any hymn book will help the player to accustom

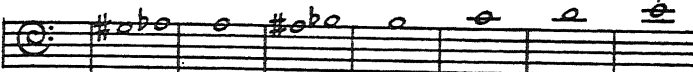
The Bass

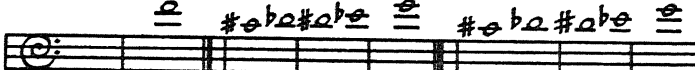
34. Tablature for Bass

F	G	G#,Ab	A	A#,Bb	B	C
●	●	●	●	●	●	●
● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
● ● ● ●	● ● ● ○	● ● ● ○ ○	● ● ○ ○	● ○ ● ● ●	○ ● ● ○	○ ○ ○ ○

C#,Db	D	D#,Eb	E	F	F#,Gb	G
●	●	●	●	●	○	○
● ● ○	● ● ○	● ○ ●	● ○ ○	○ ● ○	● ● ○	○ ● ○
● ● ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○	● ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○

The Bass

							
G#, A \flat	A	A#, B \flat	B	C	D	E	
○	∅	∅	∅	∅	∅	∅	
● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ○	● ● ○	
● ● ● ○	● ● ○ ○	● ○ ● ○	○ ● ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○	● ● ○ ○	

							
F	C#, D \flat	D#, E \flat	G	C#, D \flat	D#, E \flat	G	
∅	∅	∅	∅	∅	∅	∅	
● ○ ○	● ● ○	● ● ●	● ○ ●	● ● ●	● ● ○	● ○ ●	
● ● ○ ○	● ○ ○ ○	○ ● ○ ●	● ○ ● ●	○ ○ ● ●	○ ● ● ○	● ○ ● ○	
	DOLMETSCH BASS			SCHOTT BASS			

The Bass

35. Es ist ein' Ros' entsprungen



himself to reading music in the bass clef.

Larger basses still, with English fingering, which are twice as long as the tenor and therefore sound an octave lower than the tenor, are now being made in the Eastern zone of Germany; they are obtainable through Schott's, whose address is given in Chapter 12.

TEN

Ornamentation

It will not be possible in a book like this to deal at great length with the subject of ornamentation in recorder playing. However, a few guiding principles can be given to help in playing the commonest forms of ornamentation to be found in printed recorder music.

Ornaments are not always shown in original old versions of music since the player was expected to supply his own. It was not intended that these should be so numerous as to spoil and obscure the melodic line of the music. In much modern edited music, suitable ornaments are indicated.

In old music up to the early nineteenth century trills began on the note above that on which the trill was written; in modern music the order is reversed. For most trills, normal fingering



36. *Simple Trills*

can be used, as in example 36. A good general rule in working out the fingerings of trills is to move as few fingers as possible to produce the desired effect. The more fingers that have to be used, the untidier the effect.

Hence it sometimes becomes necessary to use special finger-

Ornamentation

ings to produce the desired result neatly without extraneous notes making themselves heard. Two frequently used special fingerings are shown in example 37. Other special fingerings

37. Trills Needing Special Fingerings

**SOPRANINO
TREBLE**

**DESCANT
TENOR**

The Finger to be removed during the trill is shown by a small dot.

●	○
○	●
○	●

are given in the chart in example 38, but it must be admitted that some of these are only approximations to the true notes. It is best to study the trills as they are needed rather than to attempt to learn them all at once. It is also worth while experimenting with special fingerings of one's own.

There are two common and effective ways of ending a trill. These are shown in example 39 and it will be seen that in the first method the trill ends with a turn by descending to the

note below the one on which the trill is executed. In the second method, the trill ends with a rest followed by a short note. In each case, the first note only of the trill is tongued.

A mordent consists of a quick shake between the main note and the note above; an inverted mordent consists of a quick shake between the main note and the note below. Both types of mordent are used in modern edited versions of old music. Different musicians have different names for mordents, but the notation used here is generally followed.

Both trills and mordents, when judiciously used, help to make a melody more lovely. They will need very careful rehearsing, and in executing a trill in old music the tendency to

Ornamentation

S. *tr*

TR

D. *tr*

T.

●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
●	●	○	○	○	●	●	●	○	○

The Finger to be removed during the trill is shown by a small dot.

38. Trills Needing Special Fingerings

39. Ending of Trills

tr

tr *tr*

(a) (b)

WRITTEN. PLAYED. WRITTEN, (a) OR (b). PLAYED.

40. Mordents

tr

tr

WRITTEN. PLAYED WRITTEN. PLAYED.

begin a trill on the note itself rather than on the note above should be overcome. The beginner will find that a knowledge of trills and mordents and the fingerings required for each one

Ornamentation

of these will help in his understanding of the possibilities of his instrument.

When players meet together in groups for consort playing, trills and mordents should be carefully practised, so that all the players are playing the same part of a given ornament at the same time. Unless this is done, the ornamentation will be ineffective and scrappy and it would be much better omitted. As most players, quite rightly, have their own individual fancies when using ornamentation, considerable difficulty may be experienced in consort playing in achieving a neat and effective result.

ELEVEN

Consort Playing

Since a number of people are now playing the recorder reasonably well, it is fairly easy for recorder players to get in touch with other like-minded enthusiasts for ensemble playing, or, as it is often called, playing in consort. Before ensemble playing begins, the players should warm up their instruments by blowing gently through them without sounding them; this can be silently and effectively done while placing the hand over the window opening. Alternatively, the instrument can be warmed by placing the head part of it under the armpit or in a pocket well beforehand. This warming process is necessary because a recorder is at its correct pitch only when warm.

If, after warming the instruments, it is found that an instrument is sharp, this can be flattened slightly by pulling out the head joint. This lengthens the tube of the recorder and so lowers the pitch. It is not possible to raise the pitch of a recorder very much, though increasing the breath pressure will do it slightly. The best of wind instruments can have their minor defects and the player must gradually get to know his own instruments. But if he learns to think in tune he will play in tune.

Even when all the members of a group of players possess recorders made by the same maker and perfectly in tune with each other, it is still possible for the group to be out of tune if

Consort Playing

the players blow with different wind pressures. These differences in wind pressure may be only slight, but nevertheless, the intonation in that group may be spoiled. Correct intonation should be aimed at by all groups, otherwise beauty of tone will never be achieved. Individual players may achieve a high standard when playing solo, but one of the besetting sins of recorder players is the failure to achieve good intonation during ensemble playing.

Another common mistake is for a player to concentrate entirely on his own part, so much so that he does not hear or attend to what is going on around him. This may be because he does not know his part well or it may be because he has developed the bad habit of doing this sort of thing. In either case, bad intonation and a tendency to race or drag is the result, and a whole ensemble can be spoiled by one such player.

In ensemble playing, great attention should be paid to neatness of attack and ending, and to breathing which affects the phrasing. When care is paid to all these details, a group which practises together regularly can achieve a high degree of skill. If the players use their ears, they will develop the habit of beginning and ending perfectly together and adjusting their breath pressures to achieve good intonation.

There is a vast repertoire of recorder duets of varying degrees of difficulty, mainly for two trebles. Not much seems to have been written for treble and tenor together, though there are several works for treble and bass. Example 41 is a slow air for two trebles by Godfrey Finger. It is not technically difficult so that it will be possible for the players to concentrate on intonation. The groups of slurred notes should be practised separately in the first instance; after this, there should be no technical difficulties in playing the duet.

Consort Playing

41. Slow Air

Godfrey Finger

The musical score is written for two parts on five systems. Each system consists of two staves joined by a brace on the left. The notation is in treble clef with a 3/2 time signature. The music is composed of minims, crotchets, and quavers, often grouped with slurs. Fingerings are indicated by numbers in parentheses above notes. The key signature contains one sharp (F#). The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Consort Playing

Trios abound in various combinations of instruments; the favourites are descant, descant and treble; descant, treble and tenor; treble, tenor and bass. There is enough published trio music to last the player a lifetime. Example 42 is one movement taken from a popular suite by J. C. Faber composed in the first half of the eighteenth century. There is a good modern edition of this for treble, tenor and bass edited by Edgar Hunt. The whole suite is rewarding to play and is not difficult.

There are many suitable quartets in print for various com-

42. Air (from 'Parties sur les Fleut Dous à 3') J. C. Faber

TREBLE

TENOR

BASS

TREBLE

TENOR

BASS

Consort Playing



Consort Playing

binations of recorders. Moreover, Bach Chorales can be found in any good modern hymnal; these provide excellent practice. It may be necessary to rewrite the alto and tenor parts for playing on the treble and tenor instruments respectively, but it is also good practice for the treble player to play the alto part an octave higher at sight without rewriting it, and also for the tenor player to read music in the bass clef.

Those players who have a keyboard instrument available will find much music for recorders and piano or harpsichord, but any pianist who wishes to accompany the solo recorder will have to learn to play sympathetically with the instrument, otherwise the two instruments will not blend. The general tendency is for a pianist to play much too loudly when accompanying the recorder.

If string players are available, the violin can play the tenor recorder's part and the 'cello the bass. Here again, the string players will have to learn to play understandingly with the recorders or they will tend to drown these soft-voiced instruments.

To spur on the intelligent player, he should keep in mind such facts as that Bach wrote the Fourth Brandenburg Concerto for solo violin, two recorders and strings and also adapted it as a Concerto in F for solo harpsichord, two recorders and strings. The Second Brandenburg Concerto was scored for solo trumpet, recorder, oboe, violin and strings. Here is a level of music at which the recorder player should aim.

The voice blends exceedingly well with the recorder and there is a fair amount of music available for recorder and voice with other combinations of instruments. A number of Bach's Church Cantatas, as well as pieces by Purcell and Handel, use the recorder with the voice. But in addition to all this difficult

Consort Playing

music, there are modern arrangements of folk songs which are fairly simple to play and which introduce recorder and voice, yet which, notwithstanding their simplicity, should give intense pleasure to the beginner.

TWELVE

Music Available

Much music has been made available to recorder players during these last few years and up-to-date catalogues of recorder music are obtainable free from the various firms. All that it is necessary to do here is to give the names and addresses of some of the publishing houses together with a short list of selected music which should help the recorder player to build up his own library of music. It should then be possible for the enthusiast to search out music which interests him personally.

One or two firms have publications which are helpful in teaching children and their catalogues should be consulted, but it is important to go forward as soon as possible to the more advanced music published by other firms. Catalogues giving suitable music for children may be obtained from:

E. J. Arnold and Son, Ltd., Leeds.

J. Curwen and Sons, Ltd., 24 Berners Street, London W.1.

W. Paxton and Co., Ltd., 36-38 Dean Street, London W.1.

A great publishing house which justly describes itself as 'The Centre for Recorder Players' is Schott and Co. Ltd., 48 Great Marlborough Street, London W.1., much of whose music is edited by Edgar Hunt and Walter Bergmann. This firm has also a large amount of music suitable for children. In the list of music which follows, their publications will be indicated by the letter S.

Music Available

More recent in the field in England is the Dolmetsch Recorder Series, well printed and edited by Carl Dolmetsch and Layton Ring and published by Universal Edition (A. A. Kalmus), 24 Great Pulteney Street, London W.1. Their publications will be indicated by the letter U.

The Oxford University Press (Music Department), 44 Conduit Street, London W.1. also publish a few pieces. These will be indicated by the letter O.

In addition to pieces suitable for children, Boosey and Hawkes Ltd., 295 Regent Street, London W.1. also publish works for more advanced players; their publications will be marked B.

Novello and Co., Ltd., 160 Wardour Street, London W.1. are the English agents for some German publishing houses, notably Bärenreiter. Their publications will be indicated by the letter N.

The following selected list is intended to be a short guide only:

DESCANT (OR TENOR) SOLO

Fifty Old English Folk-Dance Airs. (S.) Vary in difficulty.

25 Tunes from *The Beggar's Opera.* (U.) Vary in difficulty.

TREBLE (OR SOPRANINO) SOLO

Preludes and Voluntaries. (S.) Some of these are very difficult but they provide excellent practice.

TWO DESCANTS (OR TENORS)

Play and Sing with us. (S.) There are several books with this title; they are easy and have a voice and piano part as well.

Musète de Taverni, by François Couperin. (U.) This is not easy

Music Available

but some useful hints are given on how certain ornaments should be played.

TWO TREBLES

Sonata in D, by W. Croft. (S.) Moderately difficult.

Sonata in F, by Daniel Purcell. (B.) Moderately difficult.

Four Sonatas in D minor, F, B flat and A minor, by J. Mattheson.

(S.) Many of the movements in this set of sonatas are not too difficult for the beginner.

Six Sonatas in Canon Form in F, B flat, C, G minor, D minor and G, by Telemann. (N.) All fairly difficult.

Sonata in F, by J. B. Loeillet. (U.) Difficult.

Premier Suite, by Boismortier (O.) Not too difficult for beginners; it is suitable also for Treble and Tenor.

TWO DESCANTS AND TREBLE

Old English Pieces, by Morley, Weelkes and others. (S.) Not too difficult for the beginner.

Alpine Suite, by Benjamin Britten. (B.) Moderately difficult; a modern composition.

Aria, by Thomas Morley. (S.) Not too difficult for the beginner.

Air and Menuet, by Johann Mattheson. (B.) Fairly easy.

Fantasias I and VIII, by John Jenkins. (U.) Rather more difficult than those already mentioned.

Canzonet, by Henry Youll. (B.) For other combinations also.

DESCANT, TREBLE AND TENOR

Allegro, by G. F. Handel. (S.) Moderately difficult.

Handel Album. (S.) Some of these are fairly simple; there is also a piano score.

Two Fantasias, by Anthony Holborne. (S.) Moderately difficult.

Music Available

Suite, by R. Müller-Hartmann. (S.) Fairly difficult; a modern composition.

Purcell Album. (S.) Some of these are fairly simple; there is also a piano score.

Consort, by Matthew Locke. (S.) The movements vary in difficulty.

THREE TREBLES

A set of Trio Sonatas, by J. Mattheson. (S.) They vary in difficulty. A good one to begin with is that in F.

Sonata, by J. J. Quantz. (S.) Difficult.

TWO TREBLES AND TENOR

Peasant Songs and Dances, Volume 2, by Béla Bartok. (U.) Fairly simple.

Suite, by Peter Racine Fricker. (S.) A modern composition, fairly difficult.

TWO TREBLES AND BASS

Trio, by J. Pepusch. (S.) Not too difficult.

Chaconne, by Henry Purcell. (O.) Moderately difficult.

TREBLE, TENOR AND BASS

Parties sur les Fleut Dous, by J. C. Faber. (S.) This is not difficult. One movement is given in example 42.

DESCANT, TREBLE, TENOR AND BASS

There are many interesting quartets available; three good ones, which are not too difficult to begin with, are:

The Jacobean Consort Book. (S.)

Six Chorales, by J. S. Bach. (U.)

Music Available

Consorts from Four Nations. (U.)

A more difficult one is:

Fantazia, by William Byrd. (S.)

SOPRANINO AND PIANO

Le Rossignol en amour, by Fr. Couperin. (S. and U.) This is difficult.

DESCANT (OR TENOR) AND PIANO

Classical Album; twenty transcriptions by Haydn, Beethoven and other sources. (S.) Fairly easy.

Le Landais, by Michel la Barre. (S.) Moderately difficult.

Twelve Famous Classical Tunes. (U.) The tunes vary in difficulty.

Elizabethan Dances and Ayres, from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book and others. (S.) Not too difficult.

Pieces from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book. (N.) Fairly easy.

Salzburg Minuets, by Mozart. (N.) Fairly easy.

From a Music Book of 1740, edited by Doflein. (N.) Fairly easy.

Divisions on a Ground Bass, by Daniel Purcell. (U.) Fairly difficult if you put in all the suggested ornamentation.

TREBLE AND PIANO

From Old England, pieces by English Masters of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. (S.) They vary in difficulty and provide excellent practice for beginners on the treble.

Four Original Sonatas, by G. F. Handel. (S.) These are moderate to difficult.

Sonatina, by Walter Leigh. (S.) This is difficult but is one of the best pieces by a modern composer.

Sonata, by Daniel Purcell. (O.) Moderately difficult.

Sonata in F, by Giovanni Bononcini. (U.) Fairly difficult.

Music Available

Selected Minuets, by Telemann. (N.) Vary in difficulty.

TWO DESCANTS (OR TWO TENORS) AND PIANO

Nine Christmas Carols. (S.) Easy.

Play and Sing with us. (S.) There are several books, all easy. Both the above have voice parts.

Linden Lea, by Vaughan Williams. (B.) Fairly easy.

Sonata in G, by J. C. Bach. (S.) Moderately difficult.

Merry Music, by Woehl. (N.) Fairly easy.

DESCANT, TREBLE AND PIANO

Handel and Purcell Albums, already mentioned. (S.)

TWO TREBLES AND PIANO

Chaconne, by Henry Purcell. (S.) Moderately difficult.

Sonata in C, by R. Valentine. (S.) Moderately difficult.

Twelve Trio Sonatas, in three volumes, by G. Sammartini (or San Martini). (S.) The movements vary in difficulty. There is also a 'cello part to all the Sonatas.

TREBLE, TENOR AND PIANO

Andante from Brandenburg Concerto No. 2, by J. S. Bach. (S.) Fairly difficult.

Trio in F, by J. B. Loeillet. (S.) Fairly difficult. The tenor part can be played on an oboe.

RECORDERS AND STRINGS

In Bethlehem City. Seven Christmas Carols. (S.) Easy.

Andante from Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, by J. S. Bach. (S.) Difficult.

Music Available

RECORDERS AND VOICE

Corydon, Cantata for Soprano, Treble Recorder and Piano, by J. C. Pepusch. (U.) Fairly difficult.

Under the Greenwood Tree, for Soprano, Treble Recorder or Sopranino, with two Violins and Continuo, by T. A. Arne. (S.) Fairly difficult.

Sheep may safely graze, for Soprano, two Treble Recorders and Piano, by J. S. Bach. (S.) Has a group of high notes which are rather difficult for the first treble part.

Jesu, praise to Thee be given, for Mezzo Soprano, two Treble Recorders and Piano, by J. S. Bach. (S.) Moderately difficult.

The Vespers of 1610, for Choir and Orchestra, by Monteverdi. (U.) The Recorder parts are not too difficult. The complete score is expensive, but it is worth studying to see how Monteverdi used the recorders.

There is a large amount of music published on the continent, and in addition to that available through Novello's it may be mentioned that Schott's are also sole agents for some German publishing houses. Catalogues printed in English of the various publications are available through Schott's. It should be remembered that in most German printed music, the English descant recorder is referred to as the Soprano and the English treble as the Alto.

THIRTEEN

Instruments Available

Undoubtedly the best recorders are the hand-made ones produced by Arnold Dolmetsch, Ltd., of Beechside, Haslemere, Surrey. They are expensive but still cheap when compared with the prices of other wind instruments. Sooner or later the keen recorder player decides he must possess one or more of these instruments; generally, the decision is in favour of not just one but more.

Apart from these there are several other makers who produce worthwhile instruments. There is little point in giving the prices of any of them as they vary from year to year. Price lists of all the instruments are always available from good music shops or direct from the makers. In addition to the catalogue which can be obtained from Arnold Dolmetsch, Ltd., catalogues from the following firms should also be consulted.

Both Schott and Co., Ltd., and Boosey and Hawkes, Ltd. whose addresses have already been given in the chapter on *Music Available*, supply instruments as well as music.

Rose, Morris and Co., Ltd., of 79-85 Paul Street, London E.C.2. make the Dulcet Recorders.

The German firm of Johannes Adler, Marknenkirchen, Germany, make both cheap and expensive recorders with English fingering.

More expensive instruments made in Germany by the firm

Instruments Available

43. Complete Tablature

SOPRANINO
TREBLE

DESCANT
TENOR

BASS

The musical notation shows three staves. The Soprano and Descant staves are in treble clef, and the Bass staff is in bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The notes are: Soprano (A, B, C, D, E, F#, G), Descant (A, B, C, D, E, F#, G), and Bass (A, B, C, D, E, F#, G). Below the notation is a fretboard diagram with 7 frets and 6 strings. The strings are numbered 1 to 6 from top to bottom. The fretboard shows the following notes: Fret 1: 1st string (A), 2nd string (B), 3rd string (C), 4th string (D), 5th string (E), 6th string (F#). Fret 2: 1st string (B), 2nd string (C), 3rd string (D), 4th string (E), 5th string (F#), 6th string (G). Fret 3: 1st string (C), 2nd string (D), 3rd string (E), 4th string (F#), 5th string (G), 6th string (A). Fret 4: 1st string (D), 2nd string (E), 3rd string (F#), 4th string (G), 5th string (A), 6th string (B). Fret 5: 1st string (E), 2nd string (F#), 3rd string (G), 4th string (A), 5th string (B), 6th string (C). Fret 6: 1st string (F#), 2nd string (G), 3rd string (A), 4th string (B), 5th string (C), 6th string (D). Fret 7: 1st string (G), 2nd string (A), 3rd string (B), 4th string (C), 5th string (D), 6th string (E).

The musical notation shows three staves. The Soprano and Descant staves are in treble clef, and the Bass staff is in bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The notes are: Soprano (A, B, C, D, E, F#, G), Descant (A, B, C, D, E, F#, G), and Bass (A, B, C, D, E, F#, G). Below the notation is a fretboard diagram with 7 frets and 6 strings. The strings are numbered 1 to 6 from top to bottom. The fretboard shows the following notes: Fret 1: 1st string (A), 2nd string (B), 3rd string (C), 4th string (D), 5th string (E), 6th string (F#). Fret 2: 1st string (B), 2nd string (C), 3rd string (D), 4th string (E), 5th string (F#), 6th string (G). Fret 3: 1st string (C), 2nd string (D), 3rd string (E), 4th string (F#), 5th string (G), 6th string (A). Fret 4: 1st string (D), 2nd string (E), 3rd string (F#), 4th string (G), 5th string (A), 6th string (B). Fret 5: 1st string (E), 2nd string (F#), 3rd string (G), 4th string (A), 5th string (B), 6th string (C). Fret 6: 1st string (F#), 2nd string (G), 3rd string (A), 4th string (B), 5th string (C), 6th string (D). Fret 7: 1st string (G), 2nd string (A), 3rd string (B), 4th string (C), 5th string (D), 6th string (E).

Instruments Available

Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø
●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
●●●	●●●	○●●	○●●	●●●	○●●	○●●	●●●	●●●	○●●

Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø
●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●
●●●	○●●	●●●	○●●	○●●	●●●
DOLMETSCH BASS			SCHOTT BASS		

Instruments Available

of Bärenreiter can be obtained through their English agents Novello and Co., Ltd.; these too have English fingering.

Most makers supply a tablature with their instruments, and the fingerings given should be followed, as there may be slight deviations from the authentic English fingerings which are given in example 43. But it is best to examine an instrument and the tablature supplied and to purchase one which conforms to the standard English fingerings.

Some German firms make instruments resembling recorders which do not possess the authentic English fingerings and are in fact not recorders at all; it is not possible to play all the major and minor scales on them as on English recorders unless some of the holes are half-covered. This makes them difficult to finger and limits their use to music written in certain keys. Unfortunately, these instruments occasionally find their way into the English market and they should be avoided. When purchasing a recorder for the first time the advice of a competent player should be sought.

In addition to the wooden instruments, cheaper plastic recorders are also available, but many of these are most unsatisfactory. Some, however, such as those made by the Dolmetsch firm, are really good. But it is doubtful whether any recorder tone is quite so lovely as that which can be produced from a good wooden instrument.

The Dolmetsch firm have recently produced and patented what may be described as a Tone Projector which makes the recorder sound louder; it will be found useful to advanced players when giving recitals or when playing with an orchestra. The device is shaped like a tiny wheelbarrow top and is clipped over the window of the instrument; acting like a small megaphone, it projects the sound forward away from the player.

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY



114 404

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY